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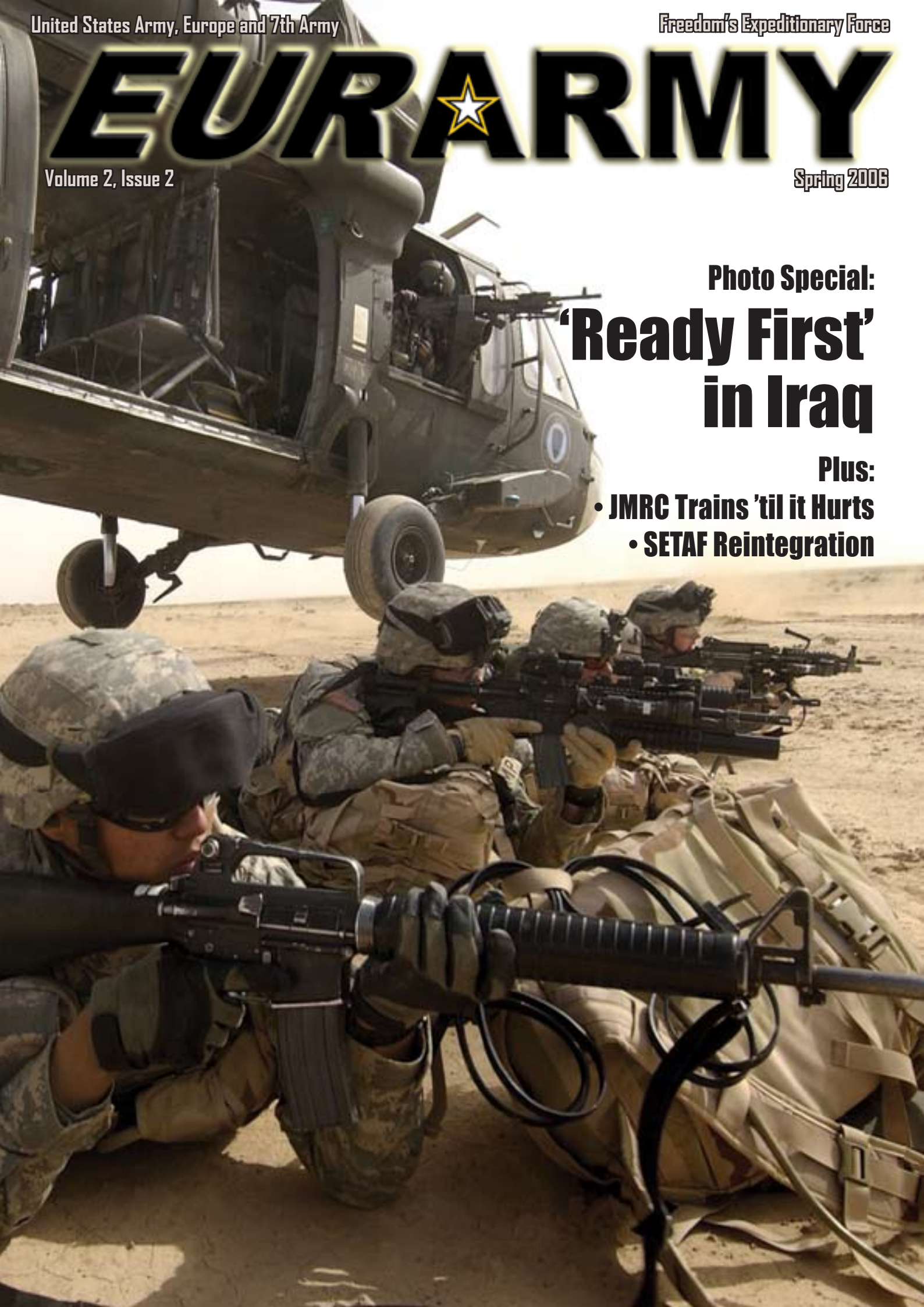

Photo Special:

'Ready First' in Iraq

Plus:

- JMRC Trains 'til it Hurts
- SETAF Reintegration

COMMANDER'S NOTES

America remains at war, and the number one priority for U.S. Army, Europe is to support that effort with trained, ready, and joint/coalition-capable formations. During this fiscal year, USAREUR will deploy almost 20,000 Troopers to Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. I could not be more proud of these men and women and of their families.

My "Commander's Intent" for USAREUR is defined by this priority and four others designed to win the war on terrorism, forge and sustain relevant coalition partnerships, and execute joint and combined operations to secure strategic objectives.

The following themes constitute the major lines of operation for this command:

• Win the Global War on Terror by providing trained, ready, and joint-capable forces to Regional Combatant Commanders, usually in a coalition environment

• Transform and set the force in an expeditionary stance with the right capabilities, geographical positioning, and joint synergies to meet COMEUR requirements

• Sustain USAREUR as a great assignment location for Soldiers, families, and civilian employees

• Build tomorrow's coalitions through effective security cooperation initiatives in support of COMEUR's theater strategy

• Develop the leadership "bench" – warrior leaders for the future Army

The Soldiers, family members, and civilian employees of USAREUR have contributed to great accomplishments, confronted new challenges, and shown tremendous adaptability as we transform and rebase the force while fighting a tough war. Our plans are sound, yet flexible, to respond as conditions and requirements change. Throughout this multi-year process, we are committed to maintaining quality facilities and services.

Our funding strategy supports the end state framed by the themes above. Investments in rebasing the force and in sustaining the right quality of life for families over the next several years will produce longer term savings. The modular brigades and enabling commands of a transformed Seventh Army will be lean, agile, capable, and relevant to the strategic environment and COMEUR requirements. USAREUR and Seventh Army will continue to be an expeditionary, full-spectrum land force with the finest Troopers and leaders our great Army has known.

Simply put, a European tour in USAREUR and Seventh Army is a great professional and personal experience. It always has been, and will remain so as we team together!

David D. McKiernan
General, USA
Commanding

△△△ *U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Aaron Allmon*

Soldiers of 1st Armored Division's 1st Brigade Combat Team conduct cordon-and-search operations in Iraq March 22.

◁◁◁ Cover *U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Aaron Allmon*

Soldiers from the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division dismount from a UH-60 Blackhawk during an air-assault mission in Iraq March 22.

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The winter 2005-2006 issue of *EUR* Army magazine contains an editing error in the "Nodal Deployment" article. Page 16 contains the line " ... USAREUR G-4 (Logistics) developed a process focused on preplanned activities occurring at preplanned deployment nodes." The line should read " ... G-3 (Operations) developed a process ..."

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Straight Talk

Command Sgt. Maj. Iuniasolua T. Savusa

Command Sgt. Maj. Iuniasolua T. Savusa is currently the senior enlisted advisor for U.S. Army, Europe's Southern European Task Force. SETAF headquarters, augmented with other specialized units, recently completed a year's deployment in Afghanistan as Headquarters, Combined Joint Task Force-76. Savusa served as command sergeant major for CJTF-76, and on his return was tapped as USAREUR's next command sergeant major. By e-mail from Vicenza, Italy, Savusa shared with ***EUR Army*** his thoughts about the deployment, the coming assignment and USAREUR troops.

WHEN YOU WERE ASKED TO SERVE AS U.S. ARMY, EUROPE'S COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR, WHAT WAS YOUR REACTION?

I was honored to be given the opportunity to continue serving in USAREUR in a position of increased responsibility.

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO ACCOMPLISH DURING THE ASSIGNMENT?

I want to build upon the great leadership of my predecessor, Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Gravens, and continue to prepare USAREUR to fight any mission, anywhere.

WHAT ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF DURING THE SETAF ASSIGNMENT AND CJTF-76 DEPLOYMENT YOU JUST COMPLETED?

I am most proud of the job everyone did (Soldiers, Airmen, Marines, Sailors and civilians) in helping a fledgling democracy take more steps on its road to freedom. We were instrumental in setting the conditions for a successful election in September, the first the country has held in decades.

WHAT IS YOUR OPINION OF THE SOLDIERS YOU'VE LED FOR SETAF, AND WILL LEAD FOR USAREUR?

My opinion of the Soldiers in SETAF and the rest of USAREUR is that they are the finest in the world. They are the best trained, have the best equipment, have the best leaders and have an incredibly unique opportunity to live and work in one of the greatest centers of culture and history.

HOW HAS THE ARMY CHANGED, BOTH IN THE 30 YEARS SINCE YOU BEGAN YOUR MILITARY CAREER, AND IN THE YEARS SINCE 9/11?

When I enlisted, the Army was still adjusting to the new all-volunteer force. Since then, there have been dramatic changes to include continual improvements in training, education and development of the noncommissioned officer corps.

I have tremendous respect for those Soldiers who have joined the Army since 9/11. These Soldiers enlisted knowing that they could and most likely would be put in harm's way sometime during their enlistment, but still they held up their right hand to protect and defend our freedoms.

It is not enough to just be effective in attacking and destroying the enemy, which we are. Soldiers must also be able to make tough moral decisions, sometimes in the absence of leadership, to accomplish the mission. Making the right decision can sometimes affect more than just the Soldier's immediate sphere of influence.

WHAT ARE THE ESSENTIAL QUALITIES THE ARMY NEEDS IN ITS SOLDIERS TO WIN THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR?

I think continuing to find people of high moral character is essential to winning the Global War on Terror. It is not enough to just be effective in attacking and destroying the enemy, which we are. Soldiers must also be able to make tough moral decisions, sometimes in the absence of leadership, to accomplish the mission. Making the right decision can sometimes affect more than just the Soldier's immediate sphere of influence.

WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO SAY ABOUT OPERATIONAL AND DEPLOYMENT TEMPO? DO YOU SEE A LIKELIHOOD OF SLOW-DOWN ANY TIME SOON?

Obviously it has increased since 9/11. It has put a tremendous strain on Soldiers and family members not only during deployments but also after everyone returns. However, through the continued efforts of Family Readiness Groups and development of reintegration programs, this stress is reduced by keeping the lines of communication open and identifying potential problems before they arise.

AS ONE OF SIX SIBLINGS WHO HAVE SERVED IN THE U.S. ARMY, AND HAVING GIVEN 30 YEARS OF YOUR LIFE TO THE ORGANIZATION, WHAT DO YOU THINK THE ARMY HAS GIVEN YOU, AND WHAT HAVE YOU GIVEN IT? WHAT CHALLENGES DOES IT OFFER FOR OTHERS?

I feel the Army has given me much more than I have given it. The Army has given me the opportunities to lead, train and mentor Soldiers and leaders. With my selection to be the next USAREUR CSM, the Army has once again given me a tremendous opportunity.

The Army has also helped me forge my sense of values, raise a family, travel the world, and all the while help make the Soldiers of the U.S. Army the best in the world.

The Army offers tremendous challenges to those willing to accept them. We are a nation at war. The potential danger to one's self is very real. We also expect Soldiers to be smarter, tougher and able to make those tough decisions.

HOW DO THE CHALLENGES OF GARRISON SERVICE OVERSEAS COMPARE TO THE CHALLENGES YOU FACED DURING DEPLOYMENT TO AFGHANISTAN, KUWAIT AND IRAQ?

They are more similar than different. The responsibility of leading, training and mentoring exists whether you are in Heidelberg or Kabul. Obviously the added element of separation from loved ones and the increased danger increases the stress on Soldiers, but the job as the senior NCO and advisor to the commander remains the same.

WHAT IS YOUR PRIMARY MESSAGE TO U.S. ARMY EUROPE SOLDIERS, CIVILIANS AND FAMILY MEMBERS?

I look forward to this tremendous opportunity the serve as your USAREUR command sergeant major.

Record of service

Command Sgt. Maj. Iuniasolua Tului Savusa is a native of American Samoa. He assumed the position of command sergeant major, Southern European Task Force (Airborne), following his duties as the command sergeant major of the Joint Readiness Training Center (Airborne) and Fort Polk, La. Savusa began his military career June 17, 1975.

Assignments

1975 First duty assignment was with 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry, 9th Infantry Division, Fort Lewis, Wash.

1976 Team leader and squad leader, 2nd Battalion, 75th Infantry (Ranger), Fort Lewis.

1979 Scout, squad leader, 2nd Battalion, 47th Infantry, 9th Infantry Division, Fort Lewis.

1980 Squad leader, 2nd Battalion, 75th Infantry (Ranger), Fort Lewis.

1981 Squad leader and platoon sergeant, Joint Security Force Company, United Nations Command, Joint Security Area, Panmunjom, Korea.

1982 Drill sergeant for Echo Company, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Brigade, Fort Dix, N.J.

1984 Platoon sergeant and scout platoon sergeant, 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry 25th Infantry Division (Light), Schofield Barracks, Hawaii.

1986 Senior instructor, Air Assault School, and chief instructor of the Light Fighters Course at the Light Infantry Training Center, Schofield Barracks.

1988 Operation sergeant, training NCO, and Military Science III Instructor, 2nd ROTC Region, Cadet Command, Fort Knox, Ky., with duty at Kemper Military School & College, Boonville, Miss.

1992 First sergeant, Alpha Company, 5th Battalion, 14th Infantry, 25th Infantry Division (Light), Hawaii, including a short tour to Sinai, Egypt.

1995 Student, U.S. Army Sergeant Major Academy, Fort Bliss, Texas.

1996 Operation sergeant major, 2nd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division, Korea.

1997 Command sergeant major, 1st Battalion 502nd Infantry, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), Fort Campbell.

1999 Brigade command sergeant major, 3rd Brigade, 187th Infantry Regiment (Rakkasans), 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), Fort Campbell.

2003 Post command sergeant major, Fort Polk and Joint Readiness Training Center, Fort Polk, La.

2004 Command sergeant major, Southern European Task Force, Vicenza, Italy.

- Jan. 5, 2002, deployed to Afghanistan and served as command sergeant major, Task Force Rakkasan, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), Operation Enduring Freedom.
- Feb. 29, 2003, he again deployed with 3rd Brigade, 187th Infantry Regiment (Rakkasan), 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), Operation Iraqi Freedom.
- March 1, 2005 deployed with Southern European Task Force (Airborne) as the command sergeant major for the Combined Joint Task Force-76 in Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan, Operation Enduring Freedom.

Savusa is married to the former Mareta Siatini Iese of Fagatogo, American Samoa. The couple has four children.

COUNTERING IEDs

by Karen S. Parrish and Gary L. Kieffer
USAREUR Public Affairs

^^^^ A .50-caliber machine gunner responds to a simulated IED detonation during convoy operations at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center's new IED training lane March 13.

Photo by Spc. Jennifer Hendley, JMRC Vipers.

JMRC: Keeping it real with live-fire & IED training

During a speech at George Washington University in Washington, D.C. March 13,

President George W. Bush spoke to members of the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies about defeating improvised explosive devices targeting Iraqi civilians and U.S. service members. (see page 11)

During mission rehearsal training March 13 at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center

in Hohenfels, Germany, units from U.S. Army, Europe's 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division faced JMRC's latest challenges: live-fire simunitions capability and a counter-IED training lane.

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During a demonstration of the Joint Multinational Readiness Center's new counter-IED lane Feb. 23 in Hohenfels, Germany, troops react to a simulated IED explosion, establishing security, scanning for enemy insurgents and evacuating wounded. *(Photo by Spc. Michael Salini, JMRC Vipers.)*

Editor's note: for definitions of terms used in this article, see the glossary on page 10.

A Combat Training Center's mission of preparing troops for war may seem like a graver version of the 1960's space race: every hard-won innovation and advance is threatened by the opposing side's progress. Success in this race, though, means more than getting there first; the goal is preserving service members' lives.

The Joint Multinational Readiness Center in Hohenfels, Germany, the Army's only CTC outside the continental United States, is in the business of training U.S. and allied nations' troops to fight in the Global War on Terror. And it's a competitive business; terrorists and insurgents shift tactics often in their attacks on coalition forces.

> "Before arriving in Iraq and Afghanistan, our combat units get training on how to counter the threat of IEDs ... They'll study enemy tactics and experience live-fire training that closely mirrors what they will see when they arrive in the zone of combat."
>
> *- President George W. Bush*

In their mission to deliver training with the look and feel of a real-world operation, JMRC's trainers replicate actual places. Hohenfels' training area holds cave complexes, "towns" and roadways modeled after those in Iraq or Afghanistan. The CTC's latest innovations extend more to threats: munitions in general and improvised explosive devices in particular.

Two Soldiers from the 2nd Brigade Combat Team provide overwatch protection during a training scenario at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center in Hohenfels, Germany, March 13.

vvvv *Photo by Spc. Matthis Chiroux, USAREUR Public Affairs.*

Col. Thomas Vandal, commander of JMRC's Operations Group, said, "Our goal is to make the training as realistic as possible for the Soldiers, so they are prepared for future combat operations. The IED threat is real and the enemy is very flexible and agile. So our training methods here are to train our Soldiers to be flexible and agile in response to such a threat."

2nd Brigade Combat Team: rehearsing for Iraq

Soldiers go to Hohenfels to assault buildings, conduct patrols, engage in house-to-house cordon-and-search, travel by convoy, capture terrorists – whatever their mission will be when they deploy, they do it first at JMRC. Now they will run, climb, drive and kick in doors armed with and opposed by live-fire paint-ball rounds, wax rounds, blanks, inert rockets and short-range training rounds. JMRC aims to deliver the crash, flash and smoke of bullets – and a taste of their sting – to troops training for combat conditions.

JMRC's higher headquarters is the Joint Multinational Training Command, based in Grafenwoehr, Germany. Unit predeployment training typically starts with weapons qualification at Grafenwoehr's ranges, then moves on to force-on-force mission rehearsal training in Hohenfels.

March 13, JMRC incorporated its new live-fire and IED training capabilities into MRX scenarios for units from 1st Infantry Division's 2nd Brigade Combat Team – the "Dagger Brigade."

Lt. Col. Steve Miska, brigade executive officer, said the Hohenfels scenarios capped off seven weeks of training that began with live-fire and command post exercises at JMTC's Grafenwoehr training area.

The Dagger Brigade completed a 12-month deployment to Iraq in February 2005, and is scheduled to return for another rotation before fall. Miska said the unit's current composition is split: 40 percent combat veterans,

Senior Timberwolf O/C talks simunitions, accuracy and behind-the-scenario staging

Lt. Col. Peter Newell:

Let's start by differentiating lethal from non-lethal training ammunition. Obviously lethal ammunition will kill or severely injure someone if they are hit by it, non-lethal will not. Simunition, which is considered a non-lethal training round, can be used in either a force-on-force environment (they actually make different colors of rounds so you can tell who shot whom) and in a live-fire environment (shooting targets just like a normal live-fire).

The difference between simunition and a normal bullet is that simunition does not have much power behind it. It in fact loses its accuracy after about 75 meters, while normal ball M-16 ammunition is good to about 600 meters. I would not try to qualify someone on a range shooting simunition; however, in an urban environment where targets are normally engaged within 10 to 25 meters, simunition is able to portray the actual ballistics of a real bullet and will knock down a target, yet will not damage the buildings around it if it misses a target.

In addition to simunition fired from M-16 rifles and M-249 squad automatic weapons, we have incorporated plastic ammunition fired from .50-caliber machine guns. Plastic .50 cal ammo, while similar to simunition in respect to its reduced ballistic signature, is still considered a lethal ammunition because if it hits something within 200 meters of where it is fired it will penetrate. Like simunition, though, plastic .50 cal ammo has reduced flight characteristics that cause it to lose its power after about 500 meters, unlike a real .50 cal round that is still going strong after more than 2,000 meters.

Finally, we also incorporated live ammunition with inert (nonexplosive) warheads from AH-64 attack helicopters and 120 mm mortars. These munitions were fired close to, but not inside the town of Schwend (JMRC's Balad.)

For the 1-18 Infantry exercise we actually had role players drive into the town and set up vehicle-borne IEDs, real junked cars, several weeks ahead of time while we videotaped them from one of the Observer/Controller helicopters. That videotape was then given to the unit as a replication of what an unmanned aerial vehicle would have seen. We then placed full-size mannequins dressed in the same clothes as our role-players inside the buildings in the town. The mannequins were attached to target lifters and connected to a sensor so that if shot they would fall just like a normal target. We also emplaced additional mannequins to represent civilians or non-threat targets, some in the buildings and rooms with the terrorist targets and some outside.

Further away from the city and near the VBIED cars we emplaced some traditional pop-up targets to replicate a force attempting to come to the rescue of the IED maker. These targets were connected to rocket-propelled grenade simulators so when raised they actually fired at the Soldiers inside the town. These targets were then engaged by the AH-64's.

and "a whole lot of new Soldiers."

"The major strength of our unit is that we have very aggressive Soldiers," he said. "We have a lot of experienced leadership at the company commander and above positions, as well as the platoon sergeants. Our mid-grade leadership has a lot of junior guys stepping up. This is a trend in the Army right now, a lot of junior guys are stepping up to the plate and they are doing some great work."

Miska said after seven weeks of intensive training at Grafenwoehr and Hohenfels, "We have got the Soldiers grounded in their basic war-fighting skills that they must know, as a baseline. Then we go in to the nuances. This (March 13 training) is the graduate-level course here. This will teach them to deal with the populace (in Iraq)."

The graduate course's first seminar was that day's training scenario one: capture or kill an IED technician.

The training scenario involved an IED technician in the Iraqi town of Balad, simulated in a Hohenfels MOUT site – a "village" where Soldiers train for military operations on urbanized terrain. The mission for Dagger Brigade's Company A, 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry, was to raid the building identified by intelligence as the target location, and capture or kill the primary IED technician. Resisting them was a notional "hostile" force using direct fire, vehicle-borne IEDs and rocket-propelled grenades. U.S. forces used aviation, indirect fire and assault teams to complete the mission.

While 1st Armored Division's 6th Squadron, 6th U.S. Cavalry flew their AH-64 Apache helicopters over the target building in close air support, 1-18th Infantry Soldiers positioned themselves on rooftops and in Humvees ranged around the site, providing overlapping covering fire. Finally, in a simunitions sound-and-light spectacle, assault teams rushed the building and "killed" the technician – a mannequin mounted on a target lifter, wax-spattered by Soldiers' shots.

Miska said the exercise was a rehearsal of infantry tactics that reinforced important lessons about weapons handling in civilian areas.

"When we are chasing down insurgents we need (to) ... minimize collateral damage," he said. "That's difficult. We need to conduct operations that are noninvasive to the populace if at all possible, and still be able to get the insurgents. That's the tough balance to strike, especially with new Soldiers."

Part of striking that balance rests on good fire discipline, Miska said – Soldiers have to be ready to shoot, but also must guard against accidental or too-hasty firing.

"We have a lot of fire discipline training," he said. "You don't have to go pointing your weapon at everybody. You keep your weapon down ... using low-ready rather than high-gunning it through the streets."

Bullets should hurt

When the time comes to fire, though, JMRC's trainers want Soldiers to get the real experience.

CTCs have until recently relied mostly on "MILES gear" - the Multiple Integrated Laser Engagement System – to register hits and near-misses in weapons training. As JMRC's project officer for live-fire training Lt. Col. Peter Newell points out, simunition offers some decided advantages over MILES: simunition rounds contain projectiles that leave the weapon and strike what they're fired at, while MILES is used with blank rounds.

^^^^ 2nd Brigade Combat Team Soldiers advance during a training mission to capture or kill an IED technician at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center March 13.
Photo by Spc. Matthis Chiroux, USAREUR Public Affairs.

"Having a simunition round zing by your head is a much more realistic experience," Newell said. "It is even more real when it hits you. And it allows you to let a guy make a mistake that quite honestly using ball-ammo would be fatal. Using simunitions won't kill you, but it will let you know you made a mistake."

Sgt. Matthew Cummins, acting Platoon Sergeant for 1-77 Armor Scout Platoon, said he could see an improvement over previous Hohenfels training.

"The MILES gear was good, but the simunitions make the training much better. It's much closer to reality. The Army is going in the right direction," he said.

"MILES gear doesn't hurt when you get hit. Soldiers just don't react the same. You get a lot out of it, but the simunitions gives you that last 10 percent," Newell said.

Newell heads up the live-fire project at JMRC, but his primary job is as senior Timberwolf observer/controller. His O/C team is tasked with overseeing training units' use of live and constructive simulation systems. The team supervises and enforces realistic battlefield effects, rules of engagement and scenario execution.

As lead Timberwolf, Newell is working to ensure simunitions are woven tightly into the fabric of training at JRMC.

"We will continue to build on the use of simunitions ... (and) expand our efforts to bring live-fire and virtual training together so that we can get companies and battalions to work together in training here. This is the quality of training Soldiers need before they deploy," he said.

IED Defeat

As of March 28, 2006, 740 U.S. service members have died in IED attacks in Iraq. Most of those killed were traveling by vehicle.

Soldiers of the 2nd BCT's 1-77 Armor were likely well aware of those facts as their Humvees rolled down a new roadway in JMRC's training area. The setting included tall light poles, an overpass and guard rails. The unpaved road was dotted along the sides with brush and debris, and an abandoned vehicle sat on one shoulder, nosed-in toward the road. A typical scene, modeled on an actual section of roadway in Iraq. Anywhere under or alongside the road, a bomb could be waiting.

More than "could be" – the road was JMRC's new IED defeat lane, and the Soldiers traveling along it in a convoy of Humvees *knew* there was an IED out there. But where?

It's this kind of scenario, lived out day after day by troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, that led to the creation of JMRC's IED defeat lane and similar facilities at the nation's other CTCs.

Soldiers down range watch for and guard against IEDs, and there are a number of techniques to deactivate or preemptively detonate them – jamming, mechanical and robotic devices – but when an IED detonates nearby, troops roar to action: vehicles swerve into position, Soldiers assume firing positions and scan for escaping terrorists; combat medics treat or evacuate the wounded.

These were the tasks for graduate seminar two: react to IED attack and ambush.

Soldiers of 1-77 Armor conducted a combat logistics patrol along an approved route that historically has been a target for IEDs. The patrol was escorted by attack aviation. Along the route, there was an IED strike and ambush, to which the unit reacted. Further along the route was a second, larger ambush in the town of Tariq Sooq. In both scenarios there were civilians intermixed with hostile "targets" that the unit had to distinguish.

Fresh from two explosions and a firefight, Sgt. Brian Nethery, assigned to 1-77 Armor's Scout Platoon, said the new IED defeat lane was well-designed.

"It lets new Soldiers work on situations that look like Iraq, with the two lanes, crossovers and the medians. It's

^^^^ A convoy of 2nd BCT Soldiers travels along the Joint Multinational Readiness Center's new IED defeat lane during a proof of principle exercise March 13.
Photo by Spc. Jennifer Hendley, JMRC Vipers.

good to work this terrain into the scenarios, even though it's still a work in progress; it's what we really need," he said.

Vandal said, "To defeat the IED threat and to train our Soldiers for this duty, we felt it was imperative to build this IED training lane. We are trying to replicate some of the highway situations you would find in Iraq."

He said JMRC will develop the new area over the summer.

"We have the site for a MOUT area that we will be developing over the next six months or so. We have some Reserve component engineer units coming here to develop this new area for us. They will have compound-like walls around the houses, (and) the highway will go through the town. We will be doing much building here along this highway," Vandal said.

As terrorists find new ways to increase the firepower and vary the detonation methods of the IEDs they build, Vandal said, the Army works to keep Soldiers trained up on the latest techniques to counter the threat.

"At each of our Combat Training Centers - the National Training Center, the Joint Readiness Training Center and here at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center - we have been developing IED training areas to better facilitate training using our new electronic counter-IED measures, as well as the tactics and techniques our Soldiers need to use to defeat the IED threat out in theater," he said.

The CTCs receive frequent updates on recent IED developments, Vandal said.

"The Army has a Joint Task Force for IED defeat. They typically come down here and share the lessons learned from down range and in theater with our controllers ... (and) the Soldiers that come down here to train. Those Soldiers from the Joint IED Task Force who have been to Iraq, they pass along that experience so that we can improve the training," he said.

Miska said the 2nd BCT's Soldiers finished their Grafenwoehr and Hohenfels rotations with a new level of confidence for their upcoming deployment.

"The trainers here did a good job of presenting the challenges to us we will probably get in Iraq," he said. "What we have to do though is keep the edge up. Right now we are in our highest level of training we can have. We have to maintain that edge. When you are in the combat zone and Soldiers are going out the gate every day, it's a different kind of challenge to keep the edge up."

Training terms

Ball ammunition, ball ammo – Full-strength ammunition used for range qualification and combat operations. Rounds contain a metal bullet and full-strength propellant.

Battlefield effects – Devices that simulate a weapon firing or a hit-effect; the audible and visible signature of weapon fire or target hit. This also includes pyrotechnics used to simulate a variety of events, including IED detonations.

Blank fire – Rounds fired through a weapon, consisting of a powder charge but no projectile.

Combat logistics patrol – A logistics package (necessary unit supply items such as ammunition, food, water and mail), moved to a supported unit by a Logistics Support Team, with a force protection element providing security.

Command post exercise – Training exercise in which the forces are simulated, involving the commander, the staff, and communications within and between headquarters elements. Also called a CPX.

Cordon and search – Isolating a pre-designated area by cordoning it off and systematically searching for enemy personnel, weapons, supplies, explosives or communications equipment.

Direct fire – Line-of-site engagement. The shooter's aiming point relies on sights incorporated in the weapon system.

Force-on-force – Exercise using two or more opposing elements to provide realism on the training battlefield.

IED – Improvised (not manufactured) explosive device designed to destroy, incapacitate, harass, or distract.

Indirect fire – Use of large-caliber weapons such as mortars and artillery, which do not require a direct line of site between weapon system and target.

Inert rocket – A non-explosive rocket round. The term "inert" applies to any ammunition that in its normal state has an explosive warhead – such as rockets, mortars, M-203 rounds and 25mm high explosive ammunition - that for the purposes of training has a warhead that does not explode. Some do emit a flash or sound signature.

Live fire – Training with lethal or non-lethal projectiles fired from a weapon.

Live-fire exercise – A military training exercise using live ammunition on targets.

Live, virtual and constructive training – Live training is conducted in a physical environment, on firing ranges and in the limited maneuver areas available on some installations. It is usually suited for smaller units (squad, platoon, company and battalion.)

Virtual simulation training provides crews, leaders and units with realistic training experiences using sophisticated simulators. In the virtual environment, simulators take the place of weapon systems and can be linked to expand the scope of the training event, so that a "unit" can consist of personnel in simulators spread across the world.

Constructive simulation training is the use of computer models and game-type simulations that permit multiple echelons of command and staff to execute their normal warfighting tasks in an unconstrained exercise environment. Involves simulated people operating simulated systems. Real people stimulate events, but are not involved in determining outcomes. An example of a constructive simulation system is the Joint Conflict and Tactical Simulation system, used for training, analysis, and mission planning and rehearsal.

The live-virtual-constructive environment creates a common battlefield, on which live units can be represented along with virtual and constructive. These units can interact with one another as though they were physically together on the same ground.

MRX – Mission rehearsal exercise or mission readiness exercise; a set of exercises designed to simulate an anticipated mission or engagement.

Notional hostile force – A simulated enemy force.

Rules of engagement – Directives issued by competent military authority delineating circumstances and limitations under which United States forces will initiate and/or continue combat engagement with other forces encountered.

Scenario execution – Ensuring a training exercise continues unabated.

Short-range training rounds/ammunition – Less powerful with a shorter range than standard ammunition. Many are still considered to be lethal due to their ability to penetrate flesh. While they are not fired at training troops, short range training rounds can help provide a realistic training environment, without requiring an impact area. It is particularly useful for MOUT training because it does not ricochet.

Target lifter – A mechanical device to raise a target into position for engagement or lower a target when it is hit.

VBIED – Vehicle-borne improvised explosive device.

Wax rounds – Wax bullets are made of paraffin wax and are not normally lethal. They will not penetrate walls so are safe to use indoors or in situations where live ammunition is dangerous.

^^^^ **This vehicle-borne IED injured civilians** when it exploded in Baghdad, Iraq, Sept. 26, 2005.
U.S. Army Photo by Spc. Preston Cheeks

March 13, President George W. Bush delivered a speech explaining Coalition efforts to combat improvised explosive devices. Excerpts from that speech follow:

These terrorists know they cannot defeat us militarily, so they have turned to the weapon of fear. And one of the most brutal weapons at their disposal is improvised explosive devices, or IEDs. IEDs are bombs made from shells, explosives and other munitions. They can be hidden and detonated remotely. After the terrorists were defeated in battles in Fallujah and Tall Afar, they saw they could not confront Iraqi or American forces in pitched battles and survive, and so they turned to IEDs, a weapon that allows them to attack from a safe distance without having to face our forces in battle.

The principal victims of IED attacks are innocent Iraqis. The terrorists and insurgents have used IEDs to kill Iraqi children playing in the streets, shoppers at Iraqi malls and Iraqis lining up at police and army recruiting stations.

The enemy is also using IEDs in their campaign against U.S. and coalition forces in Iraq, and we are harnessing every available resource to deal with this threat.

My administration has established a new high-level organization at the Department of Defense to combat IEDs, led by retired four-star General Montgomery Meigs. Gen. Meigs along with the secretary of defense briefed me at the White House on our plan to defeat the threat of IEDs.

Our plan has three elements: targeting, training and technology.

The first part of our plan is targeting and eliminating the terrorists and bomb makers. Across Iraq, we're on the hunt for the enemy, capturing and killing the terrorists before they strike, uncovering and disarming their weapons before they go off and rooting out and destroying bomb-making cells so they can't produce more weapons.

My administration has established a new high-level organization at the Department of Defense to combat IEDs, led by retired four-star General Montgomery Meigs.
... I assured General Meigs that he will have the funding and personnel he needs to succeed. In 2004 the administration spent $150 million to fight the IED threat. This year we're providing $3.3 billion to support our efforts to defeat IEDs.

Because the Iraqi people are primarily the targets of the bombers, Iraqis are increasingly providing critical intelligence to help us find the bomb-makers and stop new attacks. The number of tips from Iraqis has grown from 400 last March to over 4,000 in December.

In all, during the past six months, Iraqi and coalition forces have found and cleared nearly 4,000 IEDs, uncovered more than 1,800 weapons caches and bomb-making plants, and killed or detained hundreds of terrorists and bomb-makers.

The second part of our plan is to give our forces specialized training to identify and clear IEDs before they explode. Before arriving in Iraq and Afghanistan, our combat units get training on how to counter the threat of IEDs. Before deploying, our troops will train with the equipment they will use in the IED fight. They'll study enemy tactics and experience live-fire training that closely mirrors what they will see when they arrive in the zone of combat.

The third part of our plan is to develop new technologies to defend against IEDs. We're putting the best minds in America to work on this effort.

The Department of Defense recently gathered 600 leaders from industry and academia, the national laboratories, the National Academy of Sciences, all branches of the military and every relevant government agency to discuss technology solutions to the IED threat. We now have nearly a hundred projects underway.

We're mobilizing resources against the IED threat. I assured General Meigs that he will have the funding and personnel he needs to succeed. In 2004 the administration spent $150 million to fight the IED threat. This year we're providing $3.3 billion to support our efforts to defeat IEDs.

These investments are making a difference. Today nearly half the IEDs in Iraq are found and disabled before they can be detonated. In the past 18 months, we've cut the casualty rate per IED attack in half. More work needs to be done, yet by targeting the bomb makers and training our forces and deploying new technologies, we will stay ahead of the enemy, and that will save Iraqi and American lives.

source: www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2006/03/20060313-6.html

Chelsea Iliff

Photo courtesy Chelsea Iliff

Erik Iliff

'I love you. Goodbye.' Part II: 'It's lonely'

article by Karen S. Parrish
photos (except photos of Erik Iliff) by Gary L. Kieffer
USAREUR Public Affairs

This is the second in a series of articles following two U.S. Army, Europe families through a year of deployment. Capt. Erik Iliff, recently promoted, and Sgt. Robert Dorsey deployed in January with 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division; Chelsea Iliff and Janine Dorsey continue to go about their work and their lives in and around Giessen, Germany. This article focuses on the women, two months into a yearlong separation from their Soldier-husbands.

Editor's note: Robert Dorsey, working at a remote location in Iraq, could not be reached for comment for this article. Erik Iliff's e-mailed response to questions appears on page 21.

Chelsea Iliff described her feelings since her husband's deployment: "I think I'm in my anger phase right now."

The day Erik left she told him goodbye, drove home, cried, showered and went to work, she said. She felt ready – but when the initial shock wore off, she said, she realized how long the next year would be.

"I think when you go through a deployment, it's like the stages when you lose somebody, when somebody actually dies. A shock, a denial, an anger phase. And right away, for me, was very much a shock. 'Fine, no problem' ... And then slowly you get into that anger phase, and you realize how long it's going to be," she said. "Actually, I think Erik and I are both sort of in there. It's like, again? Really, we're doing this again? And then you say, okay. Now why are we doing this again?"

This is the Iliffs' second deployment during their Germany tour, and Chelsea said they were both prepared for the anger and sadness that comes with separation.

"We're still very upbeat about it, still very positive, but kind of in a phase, just kind of 'grr.' We'll get past that; we'll get into an acceptance stage," she said.

Chelsea credits her work at the Giessen Education Center with keeping her motivated.

"It's almost therapeutic for me to get up and go to work every day," she said. "Because inevitably some young Soldier or spouse is waiting for me when I get to work and I need to be on my game."

Janine Dorsey said going home after her husband Robert left for Iraq "was horrible."

"There were all these people saying goodbye, and it was just hard. So we just kissed, and we left. It was maybe five minutes," she said.

Janine works at Army Community Service in Giessen, and like Chelsea said work helps her stay active, but that

Janine Dorsey

Photos displayed in Janine's work area at Giessen Army Community Service. Clockwise from left: Janine and Robert at a military ball; in a photo booth; the couple's daughter. Sophia; Sophia's artwork; Janine and Robert; Janine's son, Kekai; Sophia and Kekai.

she feels the strain sometimes – and sees it in others. Giessen is a small U.S. military community, and most of the Soldiers are deployed – which means most of the spouses are coping with drastic life changes.

"Yesterday, we had a customer at the ACS in Butzbach (a community close to Giessen), and she snapped," Janine said. "Our copier contract ran out, and they took the copier, and we're trying to get another one. But she was talking about her husband being deployed, and going off about the ACS. I think everybody here (at ACS), their main objective is to try to help people. And they're going through it themselves."

Sitting in her workspace, Janine pointed alternately in various directions, indicating the locations of other women working at Giessen ACS.

"Her husband's shipped out; (points another way) he's shipped out, everybody's gone. I don't think there's anyone here, except for one person, who has a husband here. So we're all in the same boat, and we're all trying hard."

Janine said she understands the strain many community members are going through, but that she thinks a positive approach is the best coping mechanism.

"People handle things in different ways. Sometimes I just want to say, 'Calm down. Go to your happy place,'" she said.

When are you leaving?

Both women said while they had prepared for the deployment, stress built over the final days as weather and other factors made the departure date uncertain.

Janine said Robert left for Iraq Jan. 13, after several harried days for the family.

"He had to have everything packed, and everything done. And then everything kept changing," she said. "One time they were supposed to leave this day, then it was the next day, and it kept getting longer. It was great to have him there, but the time kept drawing out. I didn't want him to go, but I wanted to know when he was going. It was great to have a couple days with him, but it wasn't relaxing or like we could take a few hours and go out to dinner ... we still hadn't worked out our budget for the next year, so we spent hours working on that."

Chelsea said she and Erik said goodbye more than once.

"We spent our last week, I guess, just kind of saying goodbye to each other. And then it kept getting pushed back, then I think it was snowed in ... and it gets to be frustrating. You never want to come off like, 'boy, I'm really ready for you to go.' Or in his case, 'I'm really ready to go.' But I think it was so different from our last time. Last time it was boom, go. And that was easier," she said.

Chelsea said she talked to a neighbor whose husband had volunteered to deploy early, with the advance party.

"I thought, this lady's crazy," she said. "He's going down so much earlier. But she had been through a number of deployments before, and she said she thought it was easier on her kids to do that, rather than have him come home each time and say, 'we're leaving tomorrow. Oh, no, we're leaving at three o'clock. No, wait ...'"

She said she and Erik have a traditional "Big Breakfast Day" every weekend, and they had planned Big Breakfast as his last meal at home.

"So we did Big Breakfast Day, then we did Big Breakfast Day again," she said. "And I think once you do that, you're like, 'Okay, so ...' But then when you do get the call, you really don't believe it. You're like okay, sure. But no, they're really leaving this time. I think we were both OK, though. We were sad, but we were ready to get this started. Because as soon as we start this clock ticking down, this 365 days, the sooner we can get through it. We had the energy to get going with it."

Loneliness

Knowing Rob is spending a year in Iraq "is the hardest thing I've ever had to do, really," Janine said. "It is. It's just ridiculous. And you have to try – I don't cry in front of my kids. I don't want them to get upset, they're already upset, and I don't want them to think mom's losing it. But I'm lost without him – he's my best friend."

Janine said some advice her father once gave her helps when she's particularly sad.

"My dad told me, 'It's okay to be depressed. It's okay to cry. Just don't let it get to the point where you can't get out of it. Give yourself a time limit. Say, okay, I'm going to cry for a little bit, and then it's over with. Think of something positive: think of your children, think of all the blessings you have in your life.' And I try," she said.

Janine said she's more concerned about Rob's situation.

"I don't really know what he's doing, and I don't know where he is. I just know the general area. And that kind of bothers me, because when I see something on the news, I wonder if my husband was there. It makes me very nervous. But I try not to watch the news too much," she said. "I know we've had a few incidents with our guys. That kind of makes me worry. I'm very worried, actually. I'm really worried about him."

Chelsea said she has been staying busy, and very thankful to be getting up every day and going to work.

"The weekends are harder for me than the weekdays," she said. "I feel kind of like I was back in college. You go home after work and cook for one, sometimes I go out with my girlfriends ... it's kind of fun sometimes. And lonely too."

Chelsea said she thinks Erik is enjoying what he's doing in Iraq, so much so that he sometimes almost feels guilty about it when he calls home.

"I think he's doing good, I really do," she said. "It's funny. I think he really likes his job. Can you believe that? I'm thinking, he's in Iraq. He shouldn't be liking his job. People shouldn't like to be deployed, right?"

She worries about him getting enough to eat, she said. Because Erik is in a location remote from the forward operating base, he gets only one hot meal a day, and sometimes that's breakfast, Chelsea said.

"This guy's been eating more Ramen Noodles. So the conditions are a concern, but I know that's a function of the facility, and of course it's safer to keep convoys off the street," she said.

For both of them, she said, the separation caused by this second deployment is harder than it was the first time.

"The first time around, you do stay a little more positive," she said. "You don't know what to expect. It's like I used to run cross-country when I was growing up, and that first time I'd go out and run each year was the easiest time, because you don't know how much it's going to hurt, how long it's going to be, or how exhausted you'll be at the end of it. But you know this time. We know how long this is."

Coping

Chelsea said because Erik's job requires him to have Internet and telephone access back to Germany, the couple has been able to stay in touch nearly every day.

"If not via e-mail, I get a phone call every couple days. Usually it's e-mail. And we have really tapped in to the AKO instant messenger thing. Don't tell my boss," she said, laughing.

She said telephone contact from Iraq in general is better and cheaper than it was on Erik's last deployment.

"It would be 'Hello' and you would get cut off," she said. "You'd call back, and get cut off again. It would become so frustrating trying to call. The communication has been so much better this time, and so much cheaper. He's got a phone plan down there where he's paying three-point-nine cents a minute to call back. The cost factor has gotten so much better since our Soldiers first went in there."

Chelsea said staying busy and staying involved in community activities is another way of coping.

"I have good friends, really good friends in the community. Other spouses whose husbands are deployed – they're in the same place, going through the same thing. There's a bond there. It's important, and I hope for other spouses that they can find those bonds, because that's really been a huge thing for me," she said.

Chelsea said she recently took Erik's frequent advice to 'take some time for yourself,' and proclaimed a "Chelsea Wellness Day."

"It was Sunday – I went to the movies, read my Bible, just did those things that I needed to catch up on for myself," she said. "Erik and I are actually doing a Bible study, reading a chapter of a book together and then discussing it, and I hadn't done that in a while."

Chelsea said she finds herself becoming more spiritual with Erik deployed.

"You pray extra, extra more and extra hard every day. That part is definitely intensified," she said.

One thing Janine has done to help her mood, she said, was to make some long-planned home improvements.

"I have bought some things for the house, such as a bed for my son and some furniture for the balcony," she said. "I believe that if you are going to spend a lot of time in your home, it helps to have it feel more comfortable."

Janine said she's hoping to get DSL access soon so that she and her children, Kekai, 14 and Sophia, not yet 2, can see and talk to Rob over the Internet.

"He's supposed to get Internet access pretty soon where's he's based," she said.

Janine said talking to Robert is her favorite mood-lifter,

The view from down range

In an e-mail from Iraq, Capt. Erik Iliff wrote about the deployment, his mission and keeping in touch with his wife, Chelsea:

Photo courtesy Chelsea Iliff

I was lucky to be on the last group from my battalion to deploy. Because the departure date was pushed back 3 or 4 times there was no work to do during the last week. That gave me time to take care of last-minute pay issues and more importantly to give all my time to Chelsea. Having that extra weekend together was really a blessing to us. We were able to eat at all the restaurants that I knew I would miss and mostly we were able to spend quality alone time together.

I was able to talk to Chelsea once in Kuwait, but once I arrived in Iraq I was able to have e-mail contact with her as well as phone contact within hours of arrival. There is a great e-mail and phone center on (the forward operating base) and out here at the ... JCC where I work there is a great Internet feed. I am able to e-mail her and IM (instant message) almost every day and I call her 2-3 times a week, depending on our schedules.

I am officer in charge of the ... Joint Coordination Center or JCC. My job is to coordinate between the Iraqi Police, the Iraqi Army, and the Coalition Forces. I help to train the Iraqis on deconflicting the battlespace in the city ... and help train them to react to incidents in the city. I have a job where it is my mission to literally work myself out of a job.

Anytime you are working with a language barrier it is challenging. So when an IED goes off in the city I have to work through interpreters to get the 5 W's from the Iraqi Security Forces. That may sound easy, but I have found it consistently challenging.

My take on the mission in Iraq is that ... we have a mission to accomplish, to train the ISF to secure their own country. I daily remind myself that the Iraqi Police and Iraqi Army that I work with are the key to making Iraq a safer place, and ultimately the key to Coalition Forces pulling out of Iraq.

I didn't expect to be interacting on such a personal level with the ISF. I literally live with soldiers from the Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police. This makes my job fulfilling on a personal level as I see the ISF take a personal interest in making Iraq a better place.

I feel that (Chelsea and my) communication is much better from the start this deployment. I don't think you can ever be completely prepared for a deployment and a separation; however, we did what was right for us. We talked about it openly with each other and we both knew what the other's expectations were for the time we are separated.

Deployments are tough on a family. I regularly find myself thinking about Chelsea, and missing her. I hope this never changes. I want to miss her when I am away. You can learn to cope with being away, but I never want to feel comfortable with a deployment or separation.

but she doesn't usually get the opportunity more than once every week or two.

"I talked to him last night ... we talked for like an hour. But usually it's a short conversation – about 10 minutes every two weeks. Sometimes I get lucky and I get a couple of calls a week," she said.

She has also been working out at the gym, and she and her friends usually eat together at someone's house once a week, she said.

She'd grade herself eight on a 10-point scale for her coping skills so far, and credits some of that success to her boss, Giessen ACS director Monica R. Battle, she said.

> "If I can't keep them (ACS employees) healthy, they're not going to be able to keep the community healthy."
>
> – Monica R. Battle, Giessen ACS director

"She makes it so easy," Janine said. "When Robert calls me at work, she tells me 'take all the time you need.' She's awesome. I couldn't work in a better place, or for a better organization."

Monica said she feels it's important to take care of the people at ACS, who take care of others.

"If we don't take care of our people here, in the type of work that we do, they're not going to be able to do their jobs," she said. "If I can't keep them healthy, they're not going to be able to keep the community healthy. So I encourage my people, especially those with spouses who are down range, don't wait until you get physically sick. If you feel you need a mental health day, call in and say 'I need time out.'"

Monica said Janine's role as administrative assistant for ACS makes her central to the organization's smooth running. "She keeps me in check, she makes sure that I meet the suspenses, and she keeps me from getting my butt chewed out," she said. "She's just an exceptional employee. Even when she has a bad day, she still has a smile on her face."

Children

Janine said she's seen changes in her children, particularly Sophia, since Rob deployed.

"Sophia is really missing her dad. I didn't think she was going to be that way, because she's so young. But she has really gotten clingy ... she's been kind of having a hard time. And it took her a while to get to that point."

Sophia has seemed aware Rob was gone since he left, Janine said. "There are pictures of Rob on both cell phones. One is just for his calls, and the other one is for everybody else. But she'd pick up the phone and look at the pictures, and say 'my daddy, my daddy,' and kiss the phone."

That was the only change the almost 2-year-old showed at first, Janine said. Now, "She's funny. She used to just go to sleep when she was sleepy. Now she wants me to lay down with her, and she'll lock her arm, go like this," gesturing at her own elbow, "and hold me down. So I can't get away. If the doorbell rings she runs to the door screaming his name ... it's sad. But I'm always telling her 'Daddy's coming back.'"

Kekai, the couple's 14-year-old son, "Is a little bit older, so he kind of understands," she said. "But he worries about Rob."

Her son has been good company for her since the deployment began, Janine said, and she enjoys planning activities with him and Sophia.

"This past weekend I took the kids to the fair in Butzbach. They had a great time – then we all went out to eat, at our favorite little Italian restaurant," she said.

"Kekai's been gone to sleep-overs at a friend's house the last three weekends, and it's funny because it's so quiet when he's gone," Janine said. "I have friends who don't have kids, and I can only imagine how lonely that is. It's lonely with my kids, but without them? I would really just kind of be depressed."

Community

Janine said working for ACS makes her realize how much the community has to offer for spouses of deployed Soldiers. "People need to come out to the ACS. We have classes on all kinds of things. It's great. It's not just financial classes and the Yellow Ribbon Room and how to cope, we have cooking classes and scrap-booking classes." (For more on ACS, see page 28.)

Chelsea said she relies on Family Readiness Group meetings to help keep her in touch and informed during the deployment.

"I do my best to hit all meetings that might be important," she said. "Although I'm always pleased to see people at the meetings, I see the same people at each meeting and rarely does someone new join the group ... I want to see some new faces!"

She said the meetings offer an opportunity to learn new information and talk with other spouses, and also a chance to help the community.

"Our FRG has a group of ladies who help new moms cope with having a new baby," Chelsea said. "We have a group of ladies who bake cookies each month and mail them down range so each Soldier in the battery receives a few cookies from home. We have an 'Adopt a Single Soldier' program where we mail care packages periodically to those single guys.

"An FRG is not intended to be a be-all, end-all when your husband deploys. It is not a function that will replace your husband. An FRG is intended to empower spouses ... empower them with knowledge and opportunities. It gives them the information they need to know and the opportunities to better themselves and their families," she said.

Monica said the residents of Giessen rely on each other to keep going until the brigade comes home, bringing their loved ones back to them.

"It's important that we take care of each other," she said. "When somebody's having a bad day, we try to pick them up."

<<<< Spc. Mary Ferguson befriends Omar Sabbah (sitting next to his father, name unknown), a three-year-old injured Iraqi boy she escorted to Baghdad for medical care. (*Photo by Capt. Manuel Wong, 3rd COSCOM Civil Affairs*)

Army 'Rising Star' tells Soldiers' stories

by Spc. Matthis Chiroux
USAREUR Public Affairs

Only once in a lifetime can a Soldier hold the title of "Rising Star," best Army journalist with less than two years in the career field. To win it, a Soldier must perform well beyond the entry level. It's a hard line to walk, but this year one of U.S. Army, Europe's own marched away with the prize.

Spc. Mary Ferguson, editor of the 3rd Corps Support Command's award-winning Sustainer magazine, earned the once-in-a-lifetime honor for her work in 2005. She is now serving with her unit at Logistics Support Area Anaconda in Balad, Iraq.

Holding a degree in journalism from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Ferguson is described by her leaders as a Soldier with the intelligence necessary to excel at her job, while also possessing the intestinal fortitude to hang with the Army's toughest.

"(Ferguson) has performed well above her skill level. What she brings to the (Sustainer) is a sense of total ownership," said Lt. Col. Brian McNerney, the 3rd COSCOM chief of public affairs. "Her trademark is uniform excellence across all her products. This command is absolutely spoiled to have such an industrious, creative Soldier."

Ferguson's direct supervisor, Staff Sgt. Pam Smith, the 3rd COSCOM Public Affairs noncommissioned officer in charge, reinforces McNerney's comments.

"In my 12 years in the U.S. Army, I have never met a Soldier with a work ethic such as the one (Ferguson) possesses," Smith said. "You can't teach this type of passion for our profession, she's just a natural, with phenomenal instinct."

Ferguson said her need to excel comes from the support of her family and her pride in bringing Soldiers' stories to the world.

"The underlying motivator in every single thing I do in my life is whether or not it will make my momma proud," said Ferguson. "My momma has always made it happen for me, even when times were tough."

Ferguson said she's had many inspiring moments as an Army journalist. She once escorted a 3-year-old Iraqi boy named Omar to Baghdad, along with an Army Civil Affairs captain. Omar had been badly burned during a firefight that left his mother dead. It was the compassion for the boy in that captain's eyes, Ferguson said, that makes her determined to tell Soldiers' stories and make sure they are never forgotten.

"When we were escorting the boy, I was a bit nervous about flying into Baghdad, but then I looked at the crew who fly in and out at least five times a day. How can I complain about anything when I have Soldiers around me constantly putting their lives in greater danger than I do?" Ferguson said. "Feeling guilty won't help, but telling their stories will."

In Iraq, the stories are not always easy, she said.

"One of the most significant and eye-opening things I've ever covered was Maj. Stuart Anderson's memorial service," said Ferguson. "Maj. Anderson went through training with me in Kuwait prior to coming here. He died in a Blackhawk crash outside of Baghdad. While in Kuwait, I took a photograph of Maj. Anderson. They used the photo for his memorial, and in that moment I realized how incredibly important our job can be."

> "It's our job to make sure these Soldiers' lives and deeds are never forgotten."

"I remember looking through the lens and taking that photo like it was yesterday, and that is the image that everybody at the memorial will hold in their minds of Maj. Anderson," Ferguson said. "Covering the memorial was the hardest thing I've done since being in the Army. How do you take photographs of people mourning, of people crying, of people saluting his life? We have to, though. We just have to. It's our job to make sure these Soldiers' lives and deeds are never forgotten."

Ferguson seemingly never stops telling those stories. Her direct supervisor described Ferguson's passion for journalism as something core and driving in her character, whether she's wearing the uniform or not.

"She recently went home for her (rest and recuperation) leave," said Smith. "But while she was home, she visited with North Carolina veterans to learn about the library books that were being collected for the Soldiers in Iraq. She made the local print papers and, again, told the important story of being a Soldier in today's Army."

Ferguson will compete at the Department of Defense level for Rising Star Journalist of the Year April 11. Her office believes she will be recognized as the best in DoD.

"We know she's the best," said Smith. "We just hope the judges see it the same way."

"I love telling the Army's story and conveying the voices of Soldiers to the world," said Ferguson. "If we do it right, there are no limits to the effect Army journalists can have on people. But we have to care, and we have to find the value in what we are doing."

1BCT 1AD 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division in Iraq

All photos by Air Force Staff Sgt. Aaron Allmon

U.S. Army, Europe Public Affairs

Soldiers from 1st Armored Division's 1st Brigade Combat Team, the "Ready First," deployed early in 2006 and assumed responsibility for the northwestern region of Iraq Feb. 19. Their mission is to assist the Iraqi Security Forces in preserving that nation's democratically elected government, while ensuring the safety of the Iraqi people. This is the second tour in Iraq for the "Ready First" brigade. The unit served in Baghdad during 2003 and 2004.

In the less than two months since Feb. 19, the 1st BCT has completed more than 1,000 missions, including company-level combat patrols and a 30-day brigade-level operation incorporating three air-assault ops, according to Maj. Thomas Shoffner, brigade operations officer. More than 90 percent of

continued >

1BCT 1AD

Lt. Patrick Vankirk speaks with local Iraqis while on a combat patrol during an air assault mission near the Syrian border March 6.

those missions were joint operations with ISF members, he said.

Photographs from three of those missions – on March 6, March 22 and March 25 – appear here.

"Operations March 6 and March 22 both took place in the western Iraqi Desert about 40 kilometers (25 miles) east of the Syrian border near a seasonal lake bed called Khabrat Sunaysilah," said Lt. Col. Pete Lee, brigade executive officer.

Lee said the first operation, shown on pages 12 to 16, involved "an air-inserted team that executed a reconnaissance mission to interdict insurgent smuggling routes leading to Mosul."

"The second mission was also an air insertion, to recon a suspected insurgent compound," Lee said. "The element included site exploitation teams to search the buildings on the compound for potential items of intelligence value."

Photographs from the March 22 operation appear on pages 17 and 18.

The third operation, pictured on page 19, was a cordon-and-search March 25 in Sighar, Iraq.

Iraqi army troops worked alongside the Americans during the March 6 and 25 operations, Lee said.

"The vast majority of our combat patrols and other operations include ISF members," Shoffner said.

Photos, following pages

Page 22:
A sniper team provides security during a smuggling-route interdiction mission March 6.

1st Brigade Combat Team Soldiers and members of the Iraqi Army load into UH-60 Blackhawks after completing the interdiction mission.

Page 23:
Staff Sgt. Charles Meyers (standing) establishes satellite communications and Capt. Andrew Slack relays mission status to AH-64 Apache helicopters supporting the operation March 22.

1BCT 1AD

1BCT
1AD

Above: Soldiers conduct cordon-and-search operations at a suspected insurgent compound March 22.

Facing page: U.S. and Iraqi troops search for weapons and items of intelligence value at Sighar, Iraq, March 25.

1BCT
1AD

Feb. 25, 2005: Soldiers of the 173rd Airborne Brigade, Vicenza, Italy, prepare to depart from Aviano Air Base for a year at Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. *(U.S. Air Force photo by Bethann Caporaletti.)*

June 25, 2005: Soldiers from Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 508th Infantry (Airborne), on mission during Operation Fury Blitz in Mangritae, Afghanistan. *(US Army photo by Spc. Harold Fields.)*

Reintegration

USAREUR clears the path from front lines to home front

by Arthur McQueen
USAREUR Public Affairs

When U.S. Army, Europe brings its Soldiers back from a combat zone, ensuring their well-being is not just a logistical exercise. Body armor doesn't protect against the cumulative stresses of a yearlong deployment, and unit leaders know there's more to going home than catching a plane.

Nearly 3,000 troopers from USAREUR's Southern European Task Force, based in Vicenza, Italy, deployed to Afghanistan in February and March of 2005. The deployment divided this small community south of the Alps into two groups: deployed Soldiers and civilians who headed "down range" for Operation Enduring Freedom, and the more than 4,000 family members and 300 Soldiers who remained in Vicenza.

Melding those two groups back together after a year apart – the standard length of current Army deployments – is the aim of USAREUR's reintegration program.

Reintegration is part of the Army's Deployment Cycle Support Program, which mandates what events take place when, from predeployment to return to home station.

Lt. Col. Dave Fulton, chief of USAREUR Office of Personnel's (G1) military policy branch, said USAREUR built on the guidance outlined in the Army's Deployment Cycle Support Program to develop detailed procedures, tools and resources for reintegrating all assigned deployed units and individuals. For Reserve component Soldiers, he said, there are similar procedures covering demobilization of units and individuals assigned to the Germany-based 7th Army Reserve Command.

Building through weeks of briefings, assessments and classes for spouses at home station and Soldiers in the theater of operations, reintegration activity peaks the week after the Soldiers' return – and it's a solid week. For seven straight days including weekends and holidays – Christmas Day is the only exception – Soldiers report for a half-day of briefings, classes and paperwork. But reintegration is reunion, too, and commonly the atmosphere is welcoming, the mood is casual, and family members are encouraged to attend reintegration sessions.

The seven-day program is mandatory for anyone – Soldier, civilian or contractor – coming home from a deployment of 30 days or more, but normally large groups of Soldiers go through the process together. Part of reintegration is the usual Army record-keeping: just as they did before leaving home, returning Soldiers update their medical records and double-check their pay and insurance arrangements. Those who put cars, furniture or personal belongings in Army-funded storage arrange to reclaim their property, and single Soldiers reclaim barracks space.

The other aspect of reintegration, though, is designed to remind both Soldiers and family members of what life together used to be like, what changes a year's separation might bring, what to expect and what to watch out for.

A month 'out'

In line with USAREUR and the Army's policies, CJTF-76 Soldiers started reintegration while they were still deployed, said Capt. Calina Saucedo, deputy chief of SETAF's Office of Personnel.

"Typically when a Soldier starts reintegration processing, they are 30 days from redeploying," she said.

Experience has taught Army leaders that sending a Soldier home from a war zone is a volatile event. Army statistics show up to 15 percent of combat troops will have stress or mental health concerns. During reintegration, Soldiers are screened three times for symptoms of depression, anger issues, post-traumatic stress disorder and relationship concerns. The first of these screenings comes before they leave their deployed location.

March 24, 2006: Staff Sgt. Kevin Glass, with the 663rd Movement Control Team, greets his son, Nicholas, and his wife, Sara, after returning with his unit from Afghanistan to Caserma Ederle, Vicenza. *(Photo by Spc. Justin Nieto, SETAF Public Affairs.)*

"It is a process, it is not a seven-day event," Fulton said. "Reintegration is designed to take everyone involved through deliberate steps to reestablish the team – mentally, medically, physically, spiritually and emotionally."

The week's activities are designed to ease Soldiers "out of the totally surreal world of combat, back into the real world they left behind," said Maj. Gen. David Zabecki, SETAF Rear commander.

The week of half-days is normally followed by a 30-day mass vacation the Army calls block leave, meaning all deployed Soldiers are authorized to take time off. (The Army recommends two weeks of block leave for each six months spent deployed.)

While still deployed, each Soldier attends a suicide awareness briefing; completes a post-deployment health assessment and medical threat briefing; attends sexual assault prevention awareness classes; turns in classified computer equipment; attends finance and legal briefings; and visits the postal unit to register change of address.

While they carry out these tasks, Soldiers who have deployed before still find time to apply their own lessons learned.

"Anything that you can take care of yourself while you are still down range, do it," said Sgt. Bret Newmyer after he returned to Vicenza. "A lot of guys are going to come back, and they want to drive their cars right away but their insurance is expired. I had mine squared away down range. I paid for a few extra days since I did not know exactly when I was getting back, but the insurance was waiting in my post office box when I returned."

Newmyer, assigned to SETAF's Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry, has served with the Italy-based task force for four years. Before the Afghanistan deployment, he served in Iraq for a year. He said the "easier" assignment he had in Afghanistan bothered him.

During his Iraq duty Newmyer served in a line unit and went out on missions, he said, but in Afghanistan he was "inside the wire" working in the administrative and logistics center.

"I felt guilty, being in the conditions I was in," he said, referring to luxuries like flush toilets and Internet access. "The only satisfaction of the job you were doing came in knowing that you were pushing stuff out to the guys that needed it."

A month before CJTF-76's troops came home, personnel specialists from USAREUR's headquarters staff flew to Italy. There, they staged a video teleconference with live feed to every community that had a Soldier deployed with CJTF-76, connecting subject matter experts with an estimated 2,000 audience members from Vicenza and 13 other communities in Germany and the Benelux.

Soldiers in Kandahar, Afghanistan watched the briefing on a live television feed, and could call in questions to the panel via a dedicated line.

"I think it was a success," said Col. Ann Joseph, chief of military plans and policies division for USAREUR's Office of Personnel. "This is the first time we have had so many different locations and a variety of units involved."

The video teleconference augmented community-based support spouses of deployed Soldiers received from unit Family Readiness Groups, SETAF's Rear command and Army

Community Service. These organizations help to sustain families throughout deployments (see next page) and largely run reintegration processing.

Home safe

The day Soldiers finally arrive back at their primary duty stations, they typically turn in weapons and sensitive items, march to a gym or other facility with family members waiting in chairs or bleachers, listen to a short welcome speech and "Fall out!"

The Soldiers are then released until formation the following morning. For the next seven straight days, Soldiers will report at 8 a.m. and spend the morning completing a round of stations. USAREUR's reintegration guide classes the stations by one of four "elements of the human dimension of redeployment": physical, emotional, mental and environmental.

To help them navigate the stations, Soldiers use the three-page USAREUR Individual Reintegration Checklist, which is included in the guide and must be completed before block leave.

Vicenza's reintegration checkpoints were station A, finance, legal and housing; station B, personnel; station C, travel, identification cards, recovery of privately owned vehicles, driver's licenses and registration; station D, medical; station E, Soldier and civilian support; station F, dental; and station G, unit tasks. Free childcare is provided for all reintegrating Soldiers.

"We went through each individual station during the rehearsal," Zabecki said. "Then the first torch (early return) party that went through, we went through with them as well, to tweak this and that, making sure (the stations) did not waste the Soldiers' time."

According to Newmyer, that effort paid off. Compared to the post-Iraq reintegration he went through two years ago, he said, ""This one was better, and smoother."

Feb. 24, 1st Sgt. Jeremiah Inman, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 508th Infantry, had 250 Soldiers going through reintegration at the same time.

"A lot of Soldiers think the courses are redundant, but it is a good reminder," Inman said. "There is stuff you know, but have forgotten about, such as how to deal with (Italian laws and customs); how to deal with civil-

What about <u>during</u> deployment?

Staying the course, sustaining the force

by Arthur McQueen
USAREUR Public Affairs

"The family support business is one of the big elements of the job," said Maj. Gen. David Zabecki, SETAF Rear commander.

The rear detachment of any deployed unit has several missions: they provide reach-back administrative and logistical support to the deployed force, maintain function and equipment at the home station and serve as the communication link between deployed Soldiers and their families. Each rear detachment works through the unit Family Readiness Group to keep spouses aware of key information.

"The whole philosophy behind family support is that if you have a Soldier who is forward deployed in a combat zone who is worried about his family in the rear, then that guy is a casualty waiting to happen," Zabecki said.

SETAF Rear used technology to keep the two groups in virtual touch as much as possible, Zabecki said.

"Whenever we had a major community event here — the Christmas tree-lighting ceremony, school graduations or the 4th of July — we broadcast that live to Afghanistan via video teleconference," he said.

Family members could also arrange to see and talk with their deployed Soldiers at the Davis Family Readiness Center, said Annette Evans, director of Morale, Welfare and Recreation for Vicenza.

The center, located next to the SETAF Rear command building, added a new communications room during the deployment. The computers it holds are online, equipped with Web cams and free to families for Web chats with Soldiers downrange.

"Communication is so important, especially when you are young, and you are by yourself, maybe in your first house, on your own," said Veryleen Pier, FRG leader for Company B, 1st Battalion, 508th Infantry.

The center also served as the hub for Army Community Service, Red Cross, FRG support, classrooms and meeting space to support the families.

Veteran Family Readiness Group leaders like Pier struggle to bring in new faces to the group, from reluctant spouses to families who arrive on-station after deployment begins.

"Overseas this is essentially your family. I need to connect with these people ... I need to know who they are," Pier said.

Army Community Service, like the military grocery stores known as commissaries, appear in most Army communities worldwide. ACS serves as a center for educational and family services, as its Web site indicates. Topics at myarmylifetoo.org include:

- Army Basics • Military OneSource • Life Skills Matrix • Child and Youth Services • ACS Family Programs
- Getting Involved (Army Volunteer Corps, ACS Volunteer Program) • Army Family Action Plan
- Home and Family Life • Family Advocacy • Domestic Violence and Child Abuse • Parent Education
- Relationship Support • About Army Relocation • Youth Center • Lifelong Learning • Work and Careers
- Financial Readiness Training • Money Matters • RDC (rear detachment commander) Training Course
- Managing Deployment • What is a Family Readiness Group ? • Visit Army Virtual FRG

Local ACS organizations typically work closely with FRGs during deployments to schedule classes and events to inform, entertain or encourage families of deployed Soldiers. Class topics normally begin with communication and coping techniques early in the deployment, and progress through a range of subjects as the separation wears on.

During the weeks before CJTF-76's deployment ended, families in Vicenza could attend classes on topics including imminent changes in Soldier pay (most deployed Soldiers earn an additional several hundred dollars a month in family separation pay and various forms of danger pay. This money stops when they return home); health risks down range and what symptoms to watch for in returning Soldiers; what medical and community resources exist to help families meet reintegration challenges; and how to help children cope with an absent parent's return.

Carmen Kamiya, wife of SETAF commander Maj. Gen. Jason Kamiya, is a veteran who has seen her husband deploy four times.

"I can tell you from my experience that when my children were little, my daughters would run up to their dad and love him," she said. "Then so many minutes later they would give him the cold shoulder, because they felt like, 'you left me, you didn't tell me you were going.' You would have to give them time to adjust."

"As they got older they understand the separations more," Kamiya said. "If they could choose to be together with him, they would, but they understand the separations when they come."

Kamiya said her role in the community is to support any program that benefits the families. She spends much of her deployment time counseling and coaching more junior spouses.

"This is very much the same way you use the buddy system in combat and pair a more experienced Soldier with a younger Soldier," Zabecki said.

Dealing with loss

by Arthur McQueen
USAREUR Public Affairs

Close to 3,000 Vicenza Soldiers deployed to Afghanistan; 18 came home too early, under a flag.

It was the biggest challenge of the deployment for everyone involved.

Nothing is more difficult than casualty notification and assistance, said Maj. Gen. David Zabecki, SETAF Rear commander.

"We are a small community," said Sgt. Maj. Richard Weik, SETAF Rear senior enlisted advisor. "Any loss affects everybody, emotionally and psychologically."

Veryleen Pier is a Family Readiness Group leader for Company B, 1st Battalion, 508th Infantry. She started the B Company FRG with Heather Doles, during the unit's previous deployment to Iraq, and found a friend.

"Those (spouses) are going through the same things you are," Pier said. "They are the ones who are going to be there in a crisis."

Pier's husband, Staff Sgt. Joseph Pier, is part of the unit's rear detachment. Staff Sgt. John G. Doles, Heather's husband, left for Afghanistan Feb. 24., 2005.

Sept. 30, Staff Sgt. Doles, 29, was shot from ambush by enemy forces while conducting a 'search and attack' mission near Sha Wali Kot, Afghanistan.

"When we got notification that John died ... they made me part of the (Casualty Assistance) team," Pier said softly.

"A week and a half prior to the incident, we had been having one of those 'what if' conversations," Pier continued, "and she said, 'If they come to my door, you have to be with them, you have to promise; I can't fly home alone.'"

Zabecki said, "Most Soldiers have a blue book that the unit maintains, information that the Soldiers themselves have put down of things they would like to see happen in case they become a casualty. In most cases there is a close family friend that has been identified to come in as soon as possible to be with the spouse. So the process involves notifying the family friend, and negotiating with him or her to come in."

Pier arrived at her friend's house at 9 p.m., and stayed with her through that night. "At 3 a.m. we were still up," she said.

The days that followed were no easier. "I was there nearly every minute (of the process)," Pier said. "Whenever we had to have a meeting, I sat with her and took notes — she couldn't remember anything."

The Piers escorted the family to Chelsea, Oklahoma, and stayed through the memorial service. Afterward, Heather decided not to return to Vicenza. "My husband and I and the company commander packed up their house," Pier said.

"In a lot of cases (a close family friend) knows the family better than any of us do," Zabecki said. "She becomes an unofficial, but absolutely essential member of the team. We have used this in every one of the cases and it has absolutely proved its value."

"In many cases it is a traumatic experience for that person too. We have to watch that person as well, as she may be a mother with 3 or 4 kids," Zabecki said. "We have to have someone watch her kids too. It becomes a very complex and involved process, very labor intensive, but we have found that it pays off."

Pier is still in daily contact with her friend.

"People have said to me 'you went a little above and beyond,'" Pier said. "There is no such thing. In situations like that, there is no limit to what you owe."

"Benchmark that against what you saw in the movie during the Vietnam era, ('When We Were Soldiers' — where a taxi driver slipped telegrams informing spouses of the deaths of Soldiers into mailboxes) which actually happened," he said.

"It is the type of thing we have not had to do basically since the end of the Vietnam War," Zabecki, who served there, said. "And quite frankly during Vietnam we did a horrible job at it, absolutely horrible. We have learned significantly since then. We have come light years."

ians and identifying the agencies you can go to if you need help."

Watchful eyes

Many senior USAREUR Soldiers say one benefit of reintegration is that leaders get "eyes on" their troops every day for a week after their return from a combat zone.

The reintegration guide reads, in part:

You are returning from a high-threat, high-risk tactical operation into a much more controlled environment. You must consciously and deliberately approach risk decisions from a different perspective to protect yourself, your subordinates, and your loved ones.

The rear command is especially watchful over younger Soldiers coming back from their first deployment, Zabecki said.

"Even though the physical adrenaline is not pumping anymore, the psychological adrenaline is pumping," he said. "Too many of them come back with the mentality that they are invulnerable."

"Motorcycle fatalities are something that we are most concerned about, to the point that all redeploying Soldiers with motorcycle licenses have them suspended upon return," Zabecki said.

To get their licenses back, riders must complete the standard training course, no matter their level of previous experience or training.

"Period. No excuses, no alibis, I don't care what rank you are," Zabecki said.

Vicenza community organizations have also pitched in to give Soldiers a free ride when they need it: Vicenza residents collected cash and handed it over to unit staff duty officers.

Soldiers receive cards with the staff duty phone number, and know that they can call for cab fare if they celebrate beyond the safe driving point.

"If he enjoys himself a little too much, he gets in a cab. At the gate, they call the staff duty that pays his cab fee, to keep him from driving. And he just pays it back the next day," said Sgt. Maj. Richard Weik, rear detachment senior enlisted advisor. "It's about making sure the Soldiers are armed with information so they don't get in trouble."

> "Even though the physical adrenaline is not pumping anymore, the psychological adrenaline is pumping. Too many of them come back with the mentality that they are invulnerable."
>
> — Maj. Gen. David Zabecki, SETAF Rear commander

Hometown heroes

Leaders say it all matters, and it all helps restore Soldiers to the world they left – the briefings, the chance for leaders to see their troops every day, and the gradual transition from "all Army, all the time" back to normal family or single life.

Reintegration also gives the community and families a chance to celebrate their heroes, Zabecki said.

He said he asked the returning Soldiers what kind of reception they got at the reintegration stations. "The answer I got across the board was 'Welcome back! We're glad you're back, we're here to do everything we can to reintegrate you!'" he said.

"That attitude, and the message it broadcasts to the Soldiers, is more important than some of the minor structural aspects of what blocks they check off," Zabecki said.

Elaine Pickett
Hohenfels, Germany

Alfreda M. Dupont
Giessen and Friedberg, Germany

Jay Velis
Grafenwoehr and Vilseck, Germany

Yvette Allen
Heidelberg, Germany

Tina Helmick
Vicenza, Italy

Carolyn McNeil
Schweinfurt, Germany

SARCs: First responders against sexual assault

by Karen S. Parrish
USAREUR Public Affairs

April is national Sexual Assault Awareness Month. For U.S. Army, Europe, it also marks the approximate one-year anniversary of the Army in Europe Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program.

Headed by Rosalind Dennis, the USAREUR SAPR program manager, the campaign against sexual assault emphasizes training for all Soldiers and leaders, coordination with medical and law enforcement agencies, and particularly care for victims.

Dennis, who works for USAREUR's G1, Office of Personnel, said one of the biggest successes in USAREUR's campaign against sexual assault is the tier of professionals now working throughout the theater as SARCs: sexual assault response coordinators. Of 21 SARC positions created in 2005, she said, 19 are currently filled.

Minimum qualifications for the positions, she said, include a bachelor's degree in social work, psychology or counseling with 2 years' experience working with victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, or victim advocacy services. In addition, SARCs must have at least a year's experience as a military family member or working with the military.

"SARCs complete 40 hours of initial SAPR training through the Department of Defense, and, in addition, receive more specific Department of the Army training. Training is an ongoing process as the SAPR program continues to evolve," she said.

USAREUR has a 57-page policy memorandum outlining the Army in Europe Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program. The SARCs, she said, give policy a human face.

"They are our first responders," she said. "The SARCs are the first person many victims see."

While SARCs refer sexual assault victims to victim advocates, their primary first-responder role is to explain to victims the advocacy services and reporting options available, she said.

SARCs also provide sexual assault awareness and prevention training to their communities, and it is in that role many seem to feel they make their greatest contributions.

"When conducting briefings I am in awe at the attentiveness and interest I receive from attendees. I applaud the military for developing a program that displays a determined effort in taking care of victims of Sexual Assault," said Alfreda M. Dupont, SARC for the Giessen and Friedberg, Germany military communities.

Tina Helmick, the SARC for Vicenza, Italy's military community, said, "I have become actively involved with the community by providing various training to individuals and units to include numerous family members. I believe that I am professionally growing daily by assisting military personnel and learning as we jointly proceed through the Sexual Assault program."

Carolyn Julien, SARC for Chievres, Belgium and the Supreme Headquarters, Allied Powers, Europe – SHAPE – has integrated her self-professed love of drama into her training program, staging dramatic scenarios to illustrate the issues contributing to incidents of sexual assault: as the USAREUR memorandum points out, victims and offenders tend to be junior Soldiers; 69 percent of rape cases involve alcohol consumption; 50 percent of rape victims know their attackers, and 48 percent of sexual assault and rape cases occur on post, in barracks or government quarters.

Julien's dramatizations have earned high praise from community members, Dennis said, and from Army-level visitors as well.

Dennis said April will provide an opportunity for her, the SARCs, and the approximately 130 others involved in USAREUR and Installation Management Agency, Europe's SAPR program to raise awareness even higher.

Dennis said she is gratified by the attention commanders at all levels give to the issue. SARCs and others involved in the program will build on the past year's success, she said.

"The military realizes sexual assault is a crime," she said. "We will continue to emphasize that message in this year's training program."

SARC: Sexual Assault Response Coordinator

The SARC is an individual who serves as the designated program coordinator of victim support services to coordinate and oversee the local implementation and execution of the Army in Europe Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program. SARCs are embedded in Army Community Service and work under the auspices of the Family Advocacy Program in their community of assignment. The SARC should be contacted immediately when an incident of sexual assault occurs. The SARC will explain the victim advocate services available to the victim and assign either an installation or unit victim advocate if desired by the victim.

Source: Memorandum, Army in Europe Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program.

Pictured: Sexual assault response coordinators working in Installation Management Agency-Europe military garrisons.

Carolyn Julien
SHAPE and Chievres, Belgium

Annamaria Doby
Hanau, Germany

Billie Lightfoot Tucker
Ansbach, Germany

F. Vernon Chandler
Darmstadt, Germany

Nancy Spangler
Schinnen, Netherlands

U.S. Army, Europe History

U.S. Army photo

American troops of the 28th Infantry Division march down the Champs Elysees, Paris, in the "Victory" parade Aug. 29, 1944.

A Short History

U.S. Army, Europe & 7th Army

by Bruce Siemon
USAREUR Military History Office

The command known as U.S. Army, Europe and 7th Army traces its origins to June 8, 1942, when Headquarters, European Theater of Operations, U.S. Army — or ETOUSA — was activated in England. It was a theater army, and its function was to support the buildup and training of U.S. forces for the planned Allied invasion of northwest Europe, providing logistics and administrative services.

The only U.S. tactical headquarters in Europe at the time was V Corps, which had arrived in Northern Ireland in January 1942. It wasn't until October 1943 that First U.S. Army headquarters was organized and assigned to ETOUSA. When the U.S. VII Corps headquarters arrived in England later that month, the two corps were assigned to the U.S. First Army.

Christmas Eve 1943 it was formally announced that U.S. General Dwight D. Eisenhower would be the supreme allied commander. He reached London in mid-January 1944 and took up duties as commander of both ETOUSA and Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force, or SHAEF.

U.S. Army photo

Soldiers wade ashore during the Allied invasion of Normandy, June 6, 1944.

The invasion, Operation Overlord, was launched June 6, 1944 and had British and Canadian forces on the left flank, with the U.S. forces on the right flank. As a result, the postwar occupation found the British Zone in the northern part of what later became the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany), and the U.S. Zone in the southern part. The Soviet Zone was the eastern part of the country, which came to be known as the German Democratic Republic or East Germany. The French Zone of Occupation was an hourglass-shaped territory behind the U.S. Zone consisting of the Rhineland Palatinate, the Saar and southern Wuerttemberg.

When the war ended in Europe May 8, 1945, there were approximately 2 million U.S. military personnel in ETOUSA. The headquarters was at Versailles, where it had relocated from London the previous fall. Shortly thereafter both SHAEF and ETOUSA moved their headquarters to Frankfurt and took up station in the I. G. Farben building.

With the war over, there was no longer a theater of operations, so July 1, 1945 ETOUSA was redesignated as U.S. Forces, European Theater (or USFET), and in mid-July the international SHAEF headquarters was dissolved.

The original concept called for a blanket-type occupation in the U.S. Zone with almost 375,000 troops and 10 divisions. Although the German armed forces had fought tenaciously up to the last day, it soon became obvious that there would be no further resistance once the fighting stopped, and a large occupation force was not needed. Instead, plans were drawn up for a police-type occupation, and Feb. 15, 1946, the headquarters of the U.S. Constabulary was activated at Bamberg.

By June 30, 1946, USFET's total strength had dropped to less than 290,000. The command included Third Army, with three infantry divisions for use as a combat reserve if needed, one armored cavalry regiment, five separate infantry regiments, and the Constabulary -- three brigades of three cavalry regiments each.

Feb. 15, 1947, the Constabulary headquarters relocated

to Campbell Barracks, Heidelberg, and Third Army was inactivated March 15. On the same date, USFET was redesignated European Command, or EUCOM.

This was not the same USEUCOM we know today.

By June 30, 1947, EUCOM was down to less than 105,000 personnel. The command consisted of the small Bremen enclave, which served as the terminal for the sea line of communications (no air in those days), the U.S. Zone of occupation, and the U.S. Sector of Berlin. The U.S. Zone had two districts: Bavaria under the 1st Infantry Division, and Baden Wuerttemberg and Hesse under the Constabulary. The line of communications ran from Bremerhaven south through the British Zone to the U.S. Zone, and there was a separate infantry regiment in the U.S. Sector of Berlin.

Between February and June 1948 the Constabulary headquarters moved from Heidelberg to Stuttgart, and the EUCOM headquarters moved from Frankfurt to Campbell Barracks in Heidelberg, where USAREUR/7A headquarters still is today.

During the peaceful occupation years troop strength continued to drop, reaching 83,400 as of December 1949. Internationally, things were not as quiet as in occupied Germany. In April 1948 a coup supported by the Soviets established a communist government in Czechoslovakia. In June 1948 the Soviets blockaded land routes to Berlin, leading to the airlift. These tensions led directly to the formation of NATO, which the United States joined in April 1949. The blockade of Berlin ended in June 1949; that summer the Soviets exploded their first nuclear weapon, ending the U.S. atomic monopoly; and in the fall the Chinese communists successfully concluded their civil war and became rulers of mainland China.

U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Gary L. Kieffer

Sgt. Mike Frazier, a Soldier assigned to the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, scans the German border between east and west along the Fulda Gap in June, 1980.

The need for a defense force for Europe, instead of an occupation police force in Germany, was obvious, and the communist invasion of South Korea in June 1950 emphasized the point.

The U.S. buildup in Europe progressed quickly. Headquarters, Seventh Army, was created from the Constabulary headquarters at Stuttgart Nov. 24, 1950. The 1st Infantry Division and Constabulary units were assigned to Seventh Army, and in June and October 1951 the headquarters of V and VII Corps arrived in Europe and were assigned to Seventh Army. Between May and November 1951, one armored and three infantry divisions deployed from the United States and were assigned to the corps.

Meanwhile, as early as 1948 EUCOM had proposed establishing a line of communications, or LOC, from the west coast of France to the U.S. Zone of Germany. In November 1949 the French government agreed in principle, and EUCOM established the nucleus of an LOC headquarters at Paris in December. The formal LOC agreement was signed in November 1950, the headquarters element relocated to Orleans in the spring of 1951, and the EUCOM Communications Zone (or COMZ) activated there on 15 July.

About a year later, on Aug. 1, 1952, a new joint headquarters, U.S. European Command, was established at Frankfurt, and the former EUCOM headquarters in Heidelberg was redesignated U.S. Army, Europe. The USEUCOM headquarters moved to Paris in December 1952.

While these organizational changes were taking place, the buildup of troop strength in both Germany and France proceeded rapidly, reaching a new postwar peak of 252,000 Dec. 31, 1952, with some 25,000 Soldiers in France.

In 1956 and 1957 the divisions in Europe were reorganized into the "Pentomic" structure, with five "battle groups" instead of three regiments. The 1950s also brought equipment modernization, to include the introduction of the M-48 tank, the 280 mm cannon, rocket artillery, and M-59 armored personnel carriers – ancestors of the Bradley.

In the following years economy measures and structural changes gradually whittled away at the command until by June 30, 1961, USAREUR's strength was 232,000. In August the communist regime in East Germany erected the Berlin Wall, which surrounded the western occupation sectors, separating them from the Soviet Sector in East Berlin, and also from the surrounding countryside of East Germany. A subsequent buildup of combat forces brought USAREUR to a new postwar peak of 277,000 personnel by June 30, 1962, but a new decline set in almost immediately.

In the early 1960s the Army went through another restructuring of the divisions. Known as Reorganization Objective, Army Divisions, or ROAD, this change did away with battle groups and initiated the battalion structure that remains the basis of organization today. In Europe, the change-over was completed between February and October of 1963.

In March 1966 the French government announced the withdrawal of its military forces from NATO (but not from the political side of the alliance). This meant that the United States would have to remove the LOC from France. In December 1966 the Seventh Army headquarters was merged into USAREUR headquarters at Heidelberg to form USAREUR and 7th Army, as it still is known today. The former Seventh Army station at Stuttgart became available to serve as the new home of USEUCOM, which is also unchanged today. The withdrawal from France was completed by March 31, 1967.

Next, as an economy move, the United States announced in December 1967 that 2/3 of a division plus some support units would be withdrawn from Germany. This was REFORGER, at the time meaning "Redeployment of Forces From Germany." The first REFORGER elements left April 1, 1968, and the withdrawal was completed by Oct. 21. From then until 1990, exercises called "Return of Forces to Germany" (also REFORGER) were conducted annually to practice rapid reinforcement of Europe, and also to demonstrate U.S. resolve and capability to do so.

U.S. Army, Europe History

U.S. Army photo

Crewmen of an M60A3 main battle tank discuss the results of a field training exercise during Exercise REFORGER '85.

The late 1970s and 1980s saw significant changes. In 1975 a brigade of the 2nd Armored Division deployed to USAREUR – the first major increase of combat formations since the original buildup in the early 1950s. It was stationed temporarily at the major training areas, but in 1978 moved to a newly built facility at Garlstedt in northern Germany. Meanwhile, in 1976 the 4th Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, arrived and was stationed at Wiesbaden.

Equipment modernization in the 1980s introduced more than 400 new systems, ranging from field rations and individual weapons to the M1 Abrams tank , the M2 and M3 Bradley series of fighting vehicles, the multiple launch rocket system, Patriot air defense system, and the UH-60 Blackhawk and AH-64 Apache helicopters.

Then, after more than 40 years of the Cold War, the situation in Europe changed radically. The communist system began to crumble, the first sign being the opening of the Berlin Wall in November 1989, allowing free travel between East Germany and the western sectors of Berlin for the first time since August 1961. After the collapse of the wall, the East German regime fell, and in October 1990 Germany was formally reunited.

In the face of these changes, the Conventional Forces in Europe treaty was signed between the United States and the Soviet Union and serious planning began for the reduction of U.S. armed forces in Europe, with USAREUR to go from two corps to only one. These reduction plans (known as 'Drawdown" at the time) were well underway when Iraq invaded Kuwait Aug. 2, 1990.

USAREUR's contribution to Operation Desert Storm consisted of VII Corps elements: 1st Armored Division, augmented by the Aschaffenburg-based 3rd Brigade of 3rd Infantry Division; the 3rd Armored Division; 2nd Armored Division (Forward), which filled out the deployed 1st Infantry Division then based at Fort Riley, Kansas; and the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment. These units began deploying in November 1990 and played a key role in the "100 Hours' War" that devastated the Iraqi army in February 1991.

USAREUR's 1st Infantry Division (Forward) was in the process of inactivating, and did not deploy for combat. The division did send the brigade headquarters and two battalions to Saudi Arabia to serve as stevedores and port support units during the deployment, redeploying in February of 1991 to continue its inactivation.

U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. F. Lee Corkran

East Berliners rush toward the Brandenburg Gate to take part in the structure's official opening ceremony Dec. 22, 1989.

USAREUR also deployed non-VII Corps units including the 12th Aviation Brigade of V Corps, which deployed in August and September 1990. Other combat, combat support and combat service support elements deployed in response to specific Department of the Army taskings and to fill out deploying VII Corps units.

Upon the return of VII Corps to Germany, phased reductions began, and by December 1991 USAREUR had declined to a total of just over 143,000. VII Corps was inactivated April 15, 1992, and the reductions continued, bringing strength down to just under 97,000 by December 1992. A year later it was 77,000, a brigade from each of the remaining two divisions having been withdrawn. In August 1994 the Berlin Brigade departed, so that by December of that year strength stood at 60,545.

U.S. Air Force photo By Staff Sgt. Aaron Allmon

Soldiers from the 1st Armored Division conduct a combat patrol in the city of Tal Afar, Iraq Feb. 19, 2006.

Command organization then was essentially what it is today – USAREUR headquarters, V Corps headquarters, one infantry and one armored division (minus), 21st Theater Support Command, and the Southern European Task Force in Italy, plus of course the various specialized supporting commands.

The first Gulf War had hardly ended when new political problems arose in Europe itself, and in June 1991 Yugoslavia broke up, with Slovenia and Croatia separating and Serbia and Macedonia uniting into a new Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Fighting broke out in Croatia, and the United Nations attempted to separate the factions. In support of that effort, in November 1992 USAREUR deployed the 212th Mobile Army Surgical Hospital to Croatia. It was replaced in April 1993 by the 502nd MASH, which remained until the fall.

As these things were happening, the fighting spread to Bosnia-Herzegovina and continued until the signing of the Dayton Accords in December 1995. Dec. 20, 1995 responsibility passed from the United Nations to NATO, a multinational peacekeeping effort known as Implementation Force or IFOR. As the U.S. contribution to IFOR, in December 1995 and January 1996 USAREUR deployed Task Force Eagle –SETAF's 3-325 Infantry (Airborne) as the backbone of the initial entry force, and the 1st and 2nd Brigades of 1st Armored Division as the main elements of the task force. At its peak during the first year, TF Eagle had some 18,500 personnel as the U.S. component of Multinational Division (North) or MND(N). After a year, IFOR was retitled Stabilization Force, or SFOR, and the 1st Infantry Division replaced the 1st Armored Division. USAREUR remained engaged with the task force until the final casing of its colors Nov. 24, 2004, when the mission was transferred from NATO to the European Union.

Meanwhile, unceasing violence in the Serbian province of Kosovo resulted in NATO combat operations against Serbia, Operation Allied Force, March 24, 1999. In support of this operation, USAREUR deployed Task Force Hawk to Albania. This force, which did not take part in combat operations against Serbia, consisted of attack helicopter units, combined arms support elements, and the requisite command-and-control headquarters. Following June 10, 1999, U.N. resolution and the cessation of the NATO air campaign against Serbia, NATO deployed the NATO Kosovo Force, or KFOR, to promote stability within that province. USAREUR's Task Force Falcon deployed within days and served as the main element of Multinational Brigade (East) in southeastern Kosovo. Brigades of the 1st Infantry and 1st Armored Division were the main U.S. force initially, but by 2005 the mission had passed to the 38th Infantry Division (Indiana National Guard).

From late 2001 through today, USAREUR units have focused on preparing for and conducting operations in Iraq and Afghanistan as part of the U.S. Central Command operations ENDURING Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

USAREUR units initially contributed logistical support and expertise to the American campaigns in Afghanistan in October 2001. The largest USAREUR contribution to the ground campaign there has been the deployment of SETAF and its infantry brigade, the 173rd Airborne, to Afghanistan in early 2005 as part of Combined Joint Task Force 76.

During Operation Iraqi Freedom, the V Corps headquarters deployed to Kuwait and then led the main effort during the CENTCOM attack into Iraq. SETAF's 173rd Airborne Brigade also made a major contribution on March 26, 2003, when the brigade conducted the largest combat airdrop since the end of World War II, opening a northern front and drawing significant elements of the Iraqi Army away from the defense of Baghdad. One battalion of the 1st Infantry Division, Task Force 1-63 Armor, was deployed in Air Force C-17 cargo aircraft to provide armored support on the northern front, the first air delivery of armored forces to combat operations by the C-17.

Deploying in April 2003, USAREUR's 1st Armored Division spent 15 months with the coalition forces in Iraq, being followed in February 2004 by the 1st Infantry Division's Task Force Danger.

Elements of 1st Armored Division and V Corps deployed again in late 2005 and early 2006; while in Europe, the command faces perhaps its biggest challenge of all since the end of World War II – transformation.

U.S. Army photo

Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, supreme commander Allied Expeditionary Forces, gives the order of the day, "Full victory, nothing else," to paratroopers just before they board their planes to participate in the first assault in the invasion of the continent of Europe June 6, 1944.

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